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ORIGINAL NOVELLETTE.

HELEN BERNE.

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CHAPTER XIX.

About 10 o'clock at night, Joe Estelle sat on one side of a small table, and on the other, Tom Burton, and between them there was a bottle of brandy and two glasses. The combined fumes of the liquor and cigars, and the rather flushed faces of the two men, showed that they had not just taken their seats, and that the full bottle had been once emptied, if not oftener, during their sitting. The glances they cast upon each other's face indicated mutual distrust and dissimulation; and upon the somewhat wrinkled visage of Joe Estelle there was apparent a slight expression of contempt for the young man who had ventured to measure weapons with him in a contest for the mastery in cunning and dissimulation. The countenance of the young man expressed confidence in himself and defiance of the powers of his adversary, and his whole manner conveyed the impression that any want of intellectual skill should be supplied by physical prowess.

The reader will remember that these men met by appointment, and there could be no better proof of the importance attached, by each, to the interview, than the fact that they had emptied one bottle, and spent an hour in random conversation—neither having alluded to the subject uppermost in the minds of both. At length Burton, growing confident under the influence of brandy, ventured upon the outskirts of the subject by abruptly asking his companion what was the nature of the rumors in circulation about Helen Berne.

"I have been here," he continued, "but a short time, and everywhere I go something is said about her, from which I infer that the charges are of a grave character."

"They are of a grave character," Estelle responded, "and what is more to the point, they are true. Her conduct here has effectually blasted her good name, as Dr. — and others could testify, if they would."

"Do you, Joe Estelle, of your own knowledge, make this charge?"

"No, not of my own knowledge, but upon the testimony of those who do know, and in whom I have the fullest confidence."

"Helen Berne has been my ruin," said Burton, "and I hate her as the devil hates holy water; but allow me to say that whoever charges her with worse than cold-blooded cruelty to those who loved her—whose insinuations even that she is not as chaste as Diana herself, is an unmitigated liar. And, understand me further, sir, that though I am here to co-operate with you in breaking off her engagement with Lee, and thus making her feel the pangs she so cruelly inflicted upon me, it must be done by other means than those to which you have had recourse. That incarnation of evil, Mrs. Meddler, must keep her hands off, and I shall make it a personal matter with any man who dares reflect upon her honor."

"Mrs. Meddler's, do you mean?" asked Estelle.

"No, sir; and you, of all men, should be the last to suppose me capable of connecting the word 'honor' with the name of your mistress."

"Tom Burton," exclaimed Estelle, half rising from his seat, "you are allowing your tongue a license which I shall not tolerate; and I demand an apology for this insult."

"Take your seat, sir," Burton replied with the utmost coolness, and at the same time drawing a pistol from his pocket.

Estelle seated himself, declaring that he was unarmed.

"So much the better, Mr. Estelle, it is an additional security for your good behavior. But armed, or unarmed, I'll blow your brains out if you attempt to play the bully with me. I intend to say what I please, and if it does not please you, help yourself. And now, sir, I want to know whether you have made up your mind to pay me liberally for my services?"

"Let us review the ground we travelled over in our first interview," said Estelle, "that we may distinctly understand each other. You said that for the sum of one thousand dollars you would break off the engagement, just spoken of, and blast Helen's character."

"No, sir, I made no such proposition; as if I did, it was a slip of the tongue. For the stipulated sum, I will break off the engagement, and blast Helen's prospects—not her character. I may repay evil in kind, but am not such a brute as

to inflict a wrong beyond all reparation, should after events make it desirable."

"Well, I accept your amendment," Burton, and give you credit for the nice distinction you have drawn; but let me ask upon what principle of justice you base your demand that I shall pay you a thousand dollars for the gratification of your own revenge?"

"Between such men as you and I, sir, justice has very little meaning, and we should substitute all pretence thereto by the doctrine that might is right. I demand pay because I am not going to disturb Helen without it—she may marry Lee, or any one else, for all I care, unless something more substantial than revenge is to be my reward; and I have made the offer with the full knowledge that she will pay as much for my silence as I demand from you for my active service. The spirit of revenge, alone, has secured you the preference in the transaction."

"And may I not know, Burton, the means upon which you rely for the accomplishment of the object?"

"Yes, you may know if you can find it out by your own ingenuity; but I shall not let you into the secret, to be then told you have no further need of my aid. I have two documents in my possession that are, jointly, worth five thousand dollars. The thousand dollar one I can sell to Helen, if you have no need of it, and for the other, old Berne will pay me four thousand dollars, if you refuse it at that price—I mean the last will and testament of your brother John, which makes Mr. Berne his executor and the guardian of Jane Estelle, and Helen the heir of the latter on certain conditions."

"I must have better proof than your word, Burton, of the existence of that will before I bid for it as a speculation."

"Your brother John," said Burton, "spent several days with old Ned Motley, just before leaving for Europe, and the latter gentleman enlightened your brother upon the subject of your vile machinations, whereupon he got Motley to write another will, as I have told you, and I was requested to carry it to Winchester and see that it was recorded. But I am a far seeing man, and, impressed with the belief that I might some day convert the will into gold, I kept it, and wrote a receipt for it in the clerk's name, which satisfied Motley, and the copy sent to Mr. Berne I threw into the fire. These are the facts; but the will itself you shall not see until I see the money."

"Well, Burton, as I hinted to you before, I may as well let Mr. Berne know of the existence of the will, and leave you to settle with the law for the suppression of the document, as to pay you as much for it as I can hope to realize by its destruction."

"Very well, Mr. Joe Estelle; I presume you are ready for a settlement under this will, and as there is no chance for a trade, let us drop the subject, and I will look elsewhere for the money I so much need—Helen and her father will pay my price, and no thanks to you, sir."

"Stay, Burton! I did not say I wouldn't pay your price, but only asked for proof of the existence of the will. I am now satisfied, and we can trade, provided you will give me time to get the money. I have not a fourth of the amount with me, and must get the balance from home."

"How much time do you want, sir?"

"Six or eight days, sir; and you must meet me at — to receive the money, for I can not be seen after to-night without the risk of personal conflict, which I am, just now, anxious to avoid."

"You had better say two or three confidants, Joe Estelle, for Lee, Eskridge and Motley have all sworn to take you in hand, and you could scarcely have aroused three more formidable foes. But I accede to your terms, and the more readily because I do not wish to be seen by certain parties here, and, therefore, spend my days elsewhere. Let me have fifty dollars, and that and the twenty can be deducted from the amount to be paid."

"Here is the money, sir. Now be sure to bring the will with you, when I send you word I am ready, and, in the mean time, you may as well attend to the little business of Helen and Lee."

"As we now understand each other, Joe Estelle, I will take one more drink and leave you. If I could afford to be honest," he continued, pouring out the brandy, "I would scorn to be your partner in iniquity. Rich enough to nullify the plea of temptation, every act of your life bespeaks you a villain by nature, and, fallen as I am, I loathe and detest you. And here's wishing that your life may be a prolonged agony, and your death, an entrance upon an eternity of horrors unspeakable." And he drained the glass to its last drop.

"You can't provoke me into a quarrel, Burton, with all the odds in your favor," said Estelle, every feature distorted with passion, "but we may meet on equal terms,

when I shall hold you to a fearful reckoning."

"No, Joe Estelle, we can never meet on equal terms, and God forbid that I should ever sink to your level. I am bad enough, but had I the means to lead an honest life, there is yet latent virtue enough in me to make me what you can never be—a gentleman. And with the price you are to pay for my services, I will seek a strange land and make one desperate effort to regain my lost position."

And he staggered out of the room, directing, as if by instinct, his steps towards the gambling hall, to hazard the fifty dollars he had just received, upon odds incalculable against him. Estelle took a copious draught from the bottle, and then walked the floor—his fists clenched, and his lips tightly compressed. Hardened as he was in iniquity, the reproaches of Burton stung him to the quick; but his feelings were not those of remorse, as the malignant expression of his countenance plainly told. For some time, he continued to pace the floor, in deep thought, and at last, exclaimed aloud, and with an oath, "I will do it!"

"You should have done it before now," said Mrs. Meddler, entering the room.

"Should have done what, madam?" he asked, with evident alarm.

"Something, sir, to vindicate your honor and your manhood, instead of submitting to insults from every stripling who chooses to offer them. Lee denounced you as a scoundrel, and you have borne it with patience; and now this low fellow Burton has done the same thing, and even ventured to assail my character, yet you submitted with a tameness that would have disgraced a known coward."

"Would you have me throw away my life, madam, by assailing armed men, myself unarmed? You are a fool, and know not what you are talking about."

"Perhaps I am, sir; but no coward, to take insults from men and heap them upon women."

"In the devil's name, madam, cease your grumbling, and tell me what has procured me the honor of this visit!"

"I came on business of course, sir, but finding you engaged with Burton, I waited until he left, and while waiting, heard the handsome compliment he paid us both. Nay, sir, no more blustering," she continued, seeing that he was about to speak angrily, "but tell me what Mr. Berne has gone to Winchester for?"

"How should I know what he has gone for, madam, when I did not know that he was gone!"

"But he has gone, sir, and concealed his intentions so effectually that even I did not suspect them; and such caution implies something of importance."

"He has gone, I presume," said Estelle, to look at my brother's will, and see what he can do in Jane's behalf. If so, he is on a fool's errand, and will get a fool's wages."

"Perhaps not, sir, were you not talking to Burton about a later will of your brother's."

"And what of that, madam?"

"Why, a good deal of that, sir, if such a will was written, old Motley has not forgotten it, and if you pay Burton four thousand dollars for it, it may prove a bad investment—perhaps he has only a copy."

"Mr. Estelle showed signs of uneasiness at this suggestion, and paced the floor with unequal strides, muttering his discontent in language unintelligible to the listening ears of his visitor. At length he paused and said—

"That can not be so, Mrs. Meddler, because he was to have carried the original will for record in Winchester, and it is for that original that I am to pay him."

"Granting that to be true, Mr. Estelle, you are still not safe. Mr. Berne has heard of that will, and when he finds it has not been recorded, will write to old Motley about it, and an explanation will follow. It will then transpire that Burton was the bearer of the will and, in the course of events, he may be induced to say what he did with it."

"But what harm can that do when the will is destroyed? I can deny any statement he may make and so balance testimony that the production of the document can alone invalidate the first testament."

"That is all stuff, Mr. Estelle. Not only must the will be destroyed, but Burton must be made to leave the country, for he is in desperate circumstances, and, for a price, will tell the whole story."

"But how can he be driven from the country, Mrs. Meddler?"

"Easily enough, sir. He has forged the clerk's name to a receipt in Motley's possession, and the threat of a criminal prosecution will make him anxious to leave."

"I thank you for the hint, madam. It may do me good service, not only in getting rid of him, but in saving a part of the price I promised to pay him. He is a dangerous man to deal with, and every

precaution must be taken against his treachery."

"That is true, sir, and you had better have an eye to that other matter for which you are to pay a thousand dollars. Helen is upheld by a powerful influence here, and that influence may so far control Mr. Lee as to defeat any steps that Burton may take to impair his confidence in Helen. You and I have impeached her honor, and brought forward proof enough to have consigned her to infamy; but her own powers of fascination and the high standing of those with whom she is associated. And now, having put you on your guard, I bid you good night."

CHAPTER XX.

The reader who has accompanied us thus far, in our simple narrative of life incidents, may well ask if there is to be no end to the story. As there must be an end to everything that has a beginning, so there is a point at which this narrative must terminate. But there is no use in hurrying, and were the reader seated—as we now are—within twenty feet of the Vermillion Spring, the morning dew dropping from the leaves of the surrounding forest; the birds singing; the brook murmuring along its pebbly bed; everything inviting a calm contemplation of the beauty and harmony of nature, he would be in no hurry to turn from such a scene—to interrupt such thoughts—that he might resume the unwelcome task of recording the deeds of the wicked and the indiscretions of the weak. But our task is not wholly repulsive; in every life picture, virtue has its representatives. And as, in painting a storm, there must be light to disclose its horrors, so in depicting the blacker traits of human character, their opposites are ever at hand to strengthen the contrast—to make vice more repulsive and virtue more fascinating. But to return—

Helen was seated within her favorite enclosure of shrubbery, in deep thought. The last rays of the sun were visible upon the summit of the mountain, and her friends, whom she declined to accompany, were enjoying the luxury of a ride at that delightful hour of the parting day. Helen was alone, and her thoughts were upon the past, the present and the future—analyzing the bearings of the first upon the second, and the probable effect of both upon the last, when she was aroused by the approach of a man, and she sprang to her feet, startled by the unexpected visit of one whom she did not recognize. The once handsome face of her visitor was bloated, and its expression distorted by the habitual indulgence of the baser passions. He fixed his gaze upon Helen's varying countenance, and a change passed over his own, but its character was scarcely visible upon a visage marked by so many strong emotions, and so few of them bearing the stamp of virtue.

"I presume," he said at length, "that I am forgotten by Miss Berne."

"If ever I knew you, sir, you are certainly forgotten," she replied, evidently uneasy in his presence, yet not knowing why.

"No, I am not forgotten," he answered, "it is only that you do not recognize the wreck of my former self. When you falsely promised to become the wife of Tom Burton, he had health, prospective wealth, education, and an unblemished character. By your arts, he has lost all these, and now stands before you a living exemplification of woman's influence when exerted only to destroy."

Helen started at the announcement of his name, and her heart propelled its crimson tide over her face; but the tide soon receded and left her pale and motionless before him who thus boldly accused her of being the sole cause of his ruin. Her own conscience did not hold her guiltless, and in the dizzy whirl of emotions so suddenly called forth, she lost her presence of mind, and stood silent and confounded.

"I am pleased to see," Burton remarked, "that your career of heartless duplicity has not so completely hardened your conscience as to leave it insensible to shame."

"Sir," said Helen, her eyes flashing and her form erect, "your last remark has convinced me that your accusation is a pitiful subterfuge, and that the ruin of health and character imputed to me, is the work of your own innate depravity. And he deserves not the name of man whose feeble will is crushed by disappointment in love, and whose ignoble impulses can lead him, their unresisting slave, into dissipation, and consequent vice and degradation. I have wronged you, sir, and will not deny it; neither will I deny that I deeply regret it; but nature fashioned you for a drunkard and gambler, and evil communications hastened your fall. This you know to be true, sir, and can not expect me tamely to bear the imputation of having done that which is the work of a heart prone to evil, and influenced by vicious associations. I presume, sir, that the object of your visit is accomplished,

and hope that you will not prolong your visit."

"I like to converse with a woman of spirit," he coolly replied, "and hope to be forgiven if I fail to take your delicate hint. But the truth is, Miss Berne, there is a long unsettled account between us, and, not knowing when we may meet again, I can not consent to lose the present opportunity; and since you seem to be aware that I am a drunkard and a gambler, and therefore ready for the commission of any wrong, you will not be surprised when I tell that the object of my visit is revenge, in part, and pecuniary aid—both of which I must have."

"Revenge! In what direction will you seek it, sir! But if that really be your object, you had better enter into an alliance with Mr. Estelle and Mrs. Meddler; they are in full practice and possess the true spirit. Besides, the former is wealthy, and will pay well for any service you may render in the way of persecuting me."

Burton felt a little abashed at a guess so near the truth; but without betraying the feeling, he replied:

"The revenge I seek is within my reach, Miss Berne, without aid from any quarter, and its extent will depend upon the price you are willing to pay for my silence."

"Your silence, sir! I am willing that you shall speak out all you know, prejudicial to me, and there is no secret in your keeping for the suppression of which I would pay one cent. With this declaration, I leave you to your own machinations, only adding that this must be the last interview between us, without witnesses."

"Stay one moment," he said, stepping before her, and taking a soiled piece of paper out of his pocket. "Here is a little document, the history of which you had better learn before you leave, as it concerns upon my rights of an important character, and affecting you much more deeply than myself."

"What is it, sir?"

"It is a certificate of a marriage consummated some eighteen months ago, in the State of North Carolina."

"And what have I to do with such a certificate, sir?" She asked, impatiently.

"Listen, madam, and shall learn what you have to do with it. Do you not remember of taking a trip with a party of pleasure, across the line about that time? You do! Well, you can not have forgotten, then, that you and I stood up before a Justice of the Peace and were duly married in the presence of a crowd, and this document certifies the fact, and is in the handwriting of the officiating Magistrate."

"And do you believe, Mr. Burton, that you can impose upon me by attempting to convert a silly joke into a serious matter of fact? You know, sir, that when our party reached the country town, we found a small crowd there, of both sexes, and very soon the impression was made that we were a runaway wedding party; and that, to humor the joke, a sham marriage was agreed upon, and I being the parties. That this is true, Mr. Motley, among others, is ready to testify. It was a foolish joke, and you are at liberty to make the most of it."

"That is all true, madam, to the best of your knowledge and belief; but there is another side to the story. You will remember that, after having flattered me, for months, with the idea that I was a favored lover, you did, a few days previous to the time of which we are speaking, discard me in a manner highly insulting. I then resolved to be revenged, and to carry out that resolution, consented to join your pleasure party to the Old North State; and before commencing the journey, I wrote to the Magistrate who met us at the tavern, near the line, to procure a license and prepare to unite us in marriage. This brought together the crowd that was there assembled, and accounts for the impression that we were a runaway wedding party. Now what do you think of my version of the story?"

"That it is as false as you are base, sir. Your story is an after-thought, and its object is either to persecute me maliciously, or to extort money under false pretences. Why, sir, if your story be true, have you kept silent so long?"

"Your question, Miss Berne,—as I still call you out of respect to your feelings—I will answer with the utmost candor. I have kept silent so long, because I have prospered as a gambler, and have kept this secret as a dernier resort—a sort of last trump in a desperate game. And the rights which marriage gives me, over yourself, I have not asserted because I knew you could prove that the ceremony was a joke, so far as you were concerned, and that, such proof made, the law would release you from the obligations it imposed."

"And why then, sir, with this knowledge in your possession, have you presumed that you can make me the victim of your villainy? Do you think, even admitting your story to be true, that I would, for a moment, hesitate to seek a release from

obligations fraudulently and basely imposed?"

"No, I entertained no such thought. But when I found you loving and beloved, and learned that a hair would turn the scale against you, in the estimation of your lover, I thought—and correctly too—that you would sooner give one thousand dollars for this certificate, than let Mr. Lee know that you were married, even though you thought it was in jest; and knowing, as you do, that he would not marry you after a divorce was obtained, I am sure you will not hesitate to pay that price."

For some minutes, Helen sat with her face buried in her hands, and the tears trickling between her fingers. She had borne up firmly, during this trying dialogue, until the moment when she was reminded of the effect this unfortunate event in her life would have upon Mr. Lee. She saw that effect in all its force, and felt how idle would be the attempt to explain, to his satisfaction, the folly of her own conduct and the villainy of Burton's. This reflection, for a time, bowed her proud spirit, and she shed tears of shame and sorrow; and Burton, seeing her thus humbled, smiled in triumph, and believed the game his own. But the Helen Berne who sat before him, apparently crushed by the blow he had inflicted, was not the Helen Berne he had known in former days thoughtful, volatile and, seemingly, heartless. Experience had given her wisdom; mental suffering had awakened her sympathies; reflection upon past follies had aroused all the moral energy of her nature, and, steadfast in principle, she was prepared to suffer long and deeply sooner than swerve from the narrow path of rectitude. And when she again looked up, her countenance was composed and her voice steady, as she thus replied:

"You are mistaken, Mr. Burton, if you suppose that my future happiness depends upon a marriage with Mr. Lee, and still more mistaken if you believe that I would pay you one dollar for that certificate. I know that its existence may cause me much unhappiness, but not half so much as the after-consciousness that I had destroyed it in order that I might, by fraud, accomplish a selfish object. My father is not here to advise me, but I think I know my duty, and my first step will be to inform Mr. Motley that you have the certificate of a fraudulent marriage, and my next will be to institute legal proceedings to cancel the marriage, if there has been one, and to bring you to justice, if there has not. And now, sir, that we understand each other, there is no need for further conference, and I warn you against any attempt to approach me again on this, or any other subject."

She passed him without further notice and retreated to her room, strangely agitated at the thought that she had, probably, been a wife, for eighteen months, without knowing it, and the wife of a dissolute wretch, disowned and disinherited by his worthy father. Helen had turned over a new page in the catalogue of sensations; and, from the book of experience, had learned the additional lesson, that every act of indiscretion is, sooner or later, followed by its appropriate punishment. And yet, severe as was the punishment, she shuddered at the thought that it might have been aggravated a thousand fold, had she, in ignorance, married another, and become the wife of two living husbands.

But, might not Burton's story be a sheer fabrication! This question she asked herself, again and again; and the same mental answer was given—it must be true; there is the certificate in due form, and then the circumstances of the gathering of the crowd, and the presence of the Magistrate—these could not have been accidental; and a groan of agony was the comment upon the startling conviction. Yes, there was the certificate which the Magistrate would hardly have given of a fraudulent marriage, and Burton would surely not have demanded it as proof of an illegal proceeding; and view it in whatever light she could, the conviction was still the same, that she was a wife. It was true that Mr. Motley could bear witness, in her behalf, that the ceremony was a jest, and was so considered by the whole party, and even so treated by Burton himself; but however availing such testimony might be in a suit for divorce, it was not sufficient to set aside the marriage without the intervention of the Legislature. Such was Helen's reasoning, and when satisfied that there was no escape from its conclusions, she was surprised at the calmness with which she resigned herself to her fate—mistaking the apathy which followed the shock, for indifference to its consequences.

When Helen left Burton, he was little less surprised than she, and as he watched her retreating form, muttered to himself—
"I've lost a thousand dollars which I had looked upon as so much ready cash, and she has paid it, I believe I would have let her alone, and disappointed Joe Estelle of his revenge. But I must have money,

either who may; and were I to finish now, it would be at a loss of two thousand dollars upon which I had calculated as a certainty. Who would have thought that Helen had changed so much! She is more beautiful than ever, and there is something in her manner that made me feel like a coward."

His reverie was interrupted by Mr. Lee, who was in search of Helen, to wait upon her to the supper-table. Not finding her, he was turning to leave, without a word to Burton, whom he did not know, when the latter said:

"If it is not too dark, Mr. Lee, I would thank you to read this little document and say to what rights it entitles me, and for your opinion, I am willing to pay the usual fee." And he handed him the certificate.

Mr. Lee looked fixedly at the man, and wondered what he could be doing upon a spot which was rarely visited except by Helen and himself; and a presentiment that she was in some way connected with the paper in his hand, and the man before him, he hastily unfolded, and read the document. It fell at his feet, as he once more turned his bewildered gaze upon Burton and demanded—"What does this mean, sir?"

"It means just what it calls for, on its face," replied Burton, stooping to pick it up. "I have just been exhibiting it to the lady, but she avers that the marriage was all in fun, and that she will not stand up for her bargain. It was a run-away match—as you will infer, sir—and I suppose she concluded, after the knot was tied, that she could do better, and I have given her eighteen months for the experiment."

"Were there any witnesses to the marriage?" Asked Mr. Lee.

"Oh, yes, a plenty of them; but this certificate is witness enough for me—it is official, and I want to now of you, sir, as a lawyer, if it does not constitute me her lawful husband! She is a sly creature and, withal, very obstinate; but I guess she will have to yield this time, or sue for a divorce—a step she is not willing to take, or she would not have begged me to keep the matter a secret, and have offered me a thousand dollars for the certificate."

"I have no opinion to give you," Mr. Lee said, abruptly, and, turning upon his heel, hurried away.

"Well, this job is done," Burton said to himself; and it is well done, or I am mistaken in the signs, and I can now demand the money of Joe Estelle, that is to save my conscience.—What a pity it is that mankind is so mixed up that you can't aim a blow at one man without hitting some one else at the same time. Now, I have no grudge against Lee, but I can't hurt Helen Berne without hurting him, and I am sorry for it. But I must have money, and if he will put himself in the way, he must just take the consequences."

Having thus eased his conscience, he was moving away, when he was met by Timothy Dolt—whom the reader doubtless remembers—and who asked, in his peculiar voice—"Is your name Tom Burton?"

"Yes, my little man, that is my name, and what have you to do with it?"

"If that is your name, take care of yourself, is all I have to say."

"That I am doing all the time, my little man," said Burton. "But what is your name?"

"Dolt, sir—Timothy Dolt."

"Oh, yes; you are the man that came on here, as you thought, to marry Jane Estelle. Mrs. Meddler fooled you badly in that transaction—but give us your hand; if you are small, you showed the spirit of a man when you refused to be concealed in Miss Berne's room, at night, and to make your escape from the window, at a given signal. That was a deep-laid plot of Mrs. Meddler's against Helen's good name; but you acted the man in refusing to have anything to do with it. She is a devil—a perfect devil, and you had better keep out of her clutches.—But why do you tell me to take care of myself?"

"I can't explain, sir. But I love fair play, and say to you again,—take care of yourself." And off he went, paying no heed to Burton's call to him to stop a moment.—"Something's wrong," said the latter, to himself, "and I must find out what it is, and if danger threatens me, it must be from Estelle, because none of Helen's friends know anything, yet, of this certificate. Well, if it be so, let him look to it, and if he catches me napping, he is welcome to my scalp. The scoundrel is capable of assassination, but hasn't the courage to meet a man face to face, although his blustering manner has made some believe that he is a brave man."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE PHILOSOPHY OF APPEARANCE.
Personal Friend.—"Lizzy Jones, how is it that your wife dresses so magnificently, and you always appear out at the elbow?"
Jones.—"You see Thompson, my wife dresses according to the Gazette of Fashion, and I dress according to my Ledger."